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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TEGUCIGALPA 001122

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR INL/LP, DRL/PHD, EB/TRA, AND WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SNAR](#) [PGOV](#) [EAIR](#) [KCRM](#) [KJUS](#) [PHUM](#) [ASEC](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: ONE IF BY AIR, TWO IF BY SEA: HONDURAN
NARCOTRAFFICKING TIMELINE MARCH 2002-APRIL 2003

REF: A. TEGUCIGALPA 986

[B](#). TEGUCIGALPA 962

[C](#). TEGUCIGALPA 924

[D](#). TEGUCIGALPA 913 (ALL NOTAL)

[1](#). (SBU) The following is a listing of important narcotrafficking activities occurring in Honduras within the past year. It should be noted that there has been a sizable increase in the use of aircraft as a delivery platform for drug shipments. The occurrence of illicit aircraft tracks crossing into Honduras averages three incidents per day.

AIRCRAFT ACTIVITY

-March 31, 2002: A Beechcraft Queen Air crashed in the remote Mosquitia region of Honduras. Ninety-five AK-47s were recovered at this site (ref B).

-August 31, 2002: Police responded to a crash site in Santa Rita of a Piper Seneca (model PA-34-200T) bearing Colombian tail number HK-2083P. This particular aircraft also had an Operation Gemini Clipper sticker on its tail (ref B).

-October 16, 2002: A white Cessna made an emergency landing in Southern Honduras. The two pilots were arrested and three kilos of cocaine were recovered from the burned wreckage (ref B).

-Between December 31, 2002 and January 4, 2003: A Piper Seneca (model PA-34-200T) crashed in the vicinity of Santa Rita. No drugs were seized but arrests were made. An Operation Gemini Clipper sticker was located on the aircraft that bore the tail number N237H (ref B).

-March 5, 2003: A twin engine Air Commander believed to be transporting 500 to 1,000 kilos of cocaine crashed in the area of Kum, Nicaragua; Kum is located just south of the Honduran border in the remote region of La Mosquitia. Local villagers are believed to have taken most of the load across the Rio Coco into Honduras (ref B).

-March 19, 2003: A Beechcraft King Air entered southern Honduras and continued northwest straddling the Honduran/El Salvadoran border before it entered Guatemala where it was ultimately forced down. Two Colombians were arrested and 1,020 kilos of cocaine were seized (ref B).

-April 2, 2003: A Colombian-registered (HK-2862P) Piper Seneca loaded with cocaine was captured by police after landing on a Honduran highway near Arenal, in the Yolo department. The pilots fled the scene leaving Colombian flight plans aboard. Although only 397 kilos of cocaine were recovered at the site, it is believed that the plane originated with 1,000 kilos onboard (ref B).

-April 8, 2003: A Beechcraft Queen Air violated Honduran air space in the south of the country, but was not intercepted. The aircraft was believed to have approximately 1,000 kilos of cocaine onboard (ref B).

-April 14, 2003: The Honduran Air Force forced down an Aero Commander over southern Honduras. The two Colombian pilots were killed. Honduran police collected approximately 942 kilos of cocaine from the crash site (refs A, C, and D).

MARITIME ACTIVITY

-November 29, 2002: Honduran authorities seized 2.2 kilos of cocaine from a go-fast boat on a beach in La Mosquitia. During the operation two traffickers were killed, two captured, and the remaining two escaped.

-December 11, 2002: USD 460,000 was seized from F/U "Captain Ryan" in La Ceiba, Honduras. Six people were arrested, including 1 Panamanian.

-January 21, 2003: USD 380,000 was seized from a go-fast

boat at Roatan Island, Honduras. Several arrests were made in the seizure.

-March 6, 2003: Four go-fast boats escaped capture off the northern coast of Honduras during Operation Rio Coco.

-March 18, 2003: Honduran police disrupted a maritime drug transfer operation. The twelve subjects arrested were in possession of 12 hand guns, two AK-47s, one M-16, one GPS and 13 cell phones. Some of the individuals arrested in the event are known traffickers. Subsequent investigation revealed that they are connected to a prominent narcotrafficking family.

-April 13, 2003: An abandoned go-fast boat was found in the vicinity of Puerto Castilla equipped with three 250 horsepower engines and 10 barrels of fuel.

12. (SBU) Comment: The events listed above offer only a glimpse into the narcotrafficking operations that transit Honduras. Post, through the Political Section's INL programs, DEA, and TAT, work closely with the GOH on combating narcotrafficking. It is clear to Post that the GOH cannot fight this battle without the support of the USG. End Comment.
Palmer